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FACTORS AFFECTING THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE PACIFIC¹

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The topic of the afternoon is "The Policy of the United States in the Pacific." I think I am quite safe in saying from a governmental point of view that there is no policy of the United States in the Pacific at the present time so far as the general government is concerned. And how could it be so with a lack of continuity in the state department, even when it is carried on under the same party but with different participants, a break occurring in the continuity with a change of party, and an absolute lack of continuity in the diplomatic service in the high grades? Mr. Grahame spoke at this morning's session of subordinates who realize that the moment they attain sufficient distinction to be promoted they will be quickly removed. There is an approaching lack of continuity, I am afraid, in the consular service. Consequently, the phenomenon of the enunciation of what will be the policy of the United States in the Pacific is here entrusted to hands that have no official standing so far as creating that policy, but who will give you their own views as to what it should be. Certainly something constructive should be gained from such enunciations.

There are curious points in connection with the Pacific. The oldest state of California is only three score years and ten of age. The other states are newer still. Alaska with its rich material is simply approaching middle age. What is known as the slope of the Pacific, bordering on the Pacific Ocean, is practically the largest territory—in fact, the only home territory of any great power except that of Japan, and yet it has been isolated on account of its want of direct water communication with us and with Europe. I doubt whether in any Pacific port of the United States there is a line of steamers direct from Europe carrying passengers and freight. To an extent, the result has been that we have created a coastwise

¹Remarks as presiding officer at the session of the Academy, Saturday afternoon, April 4, 1914.

traffic on the Pacific coast which embraces practically all of the American mercantile marine of any value that we have, the only exception probably being the antiquated American Line running from New York to Southampton. The coastwise traffic and ships, as understood in the United States, are vastly different from those of any other country in the world. Others consider it to mean a continuous coastal traffic without any intermediate stops in foreign territory.

In the United States we first created our intercoastal traffic by the use of the Isthmus of Panama. We enlarged it by the use of Cape Horn and it has been further enlarged by the use of the Hawaiian Islands, and still further by the Philippines, so that practically the Pacific Mail Steamship Company carries coastwise traffic from San Francisco to Manila with incidental stops in China and Japan. Consequently, the comprehensive term of coastwise traffic means all that we have.